

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COA-02 CG-00 EB-11 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 DLOS-06 DODE-00 SS-20 NSC-10 SAM-01

SAJ-01 NIC-01 PRS-01 COME-00 /093 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/SOV:WDYESS:CR

APPROVED BY EUR:JAARMITAGE

S/FW:CMDR-WELING

EUR/SOV:JFMA

LOCK

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R 072354Z FEB 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET FISHING VESSELS - FURTHER PROBLEMS

REF: STATE 24430

1. TOWING TO KODIAK OF THE SOVIET FISHING TRAWLER
ARRESTED FEBRUARY 5 IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY. A SECOND
INCIDENT INVOLVING TWO SOVIET FISHING VESSELS ON
FEBRUARY 6 HAS BEEN RESOLVED, BUT NOT BEFORE THE
MATTER HAD ESCALATED BECAUSE OF A REGRETTABLE DECISION
OF THE SOVIET VESSELS TO ATTEMPT TO FLEE.

2. AT 0850 P, GMT ON FEBRUARY 6 THE COAST GUARD RECEIVED
AN EYE-WITNESS REPORT FROM AN AMERICAN VESSEL THAT A
SOVIET TRAWLER AND FACTORY SHIP WERE TRANSFERRING CARGO
AND PERSONNEL WELL INSIDE THE 12-MILE ZONE (LOCATION:
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57-18.7 N;152-23.1 W), WHICH IS CONTRARY TO US LAW. A

COAST GUARD HELICOPTER, WITH A NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE AGENT ABOARD, OBSERVED THE TRANSFER OF CARGO AND PERSONNEL SHORTLY AFTERWARDS. THE COAST GUARD ORDERED THE SOVIET VESSELS TO HEAVE TO BY MEANS OF A MESSAGE BLOCK WHICH WAS RETRIEVED BY THE SOVIET TRAWLER; INSTEAD, BOTH SOVIET VESSELS FLED. THE COAST GUARD INSTITUTED HOT PURSUIT AND ASKED THAT THE DEPARTMENT INTERCEDE WITH THE SOVIET EMBASSY TO HAVE SOVIET AUTHORITIES DIRECT THE FLEEING SHIPS TO COMPLY WITH COAST GUARD ORDERS TO STOP.

3. THE DEPARTMENT TELEPHONED SOVIET CHARGE VORONTSOV 1200 P.M. GMT (8:00 P.M. LOCAL) TO ASK THAT THE FLEEING SOVIET SHIPS BE DIRECTED TO COOPERATE WITH THE COAST GUARD. VORONTSOV PROMISED TO COMMUNICATE IMMEDIATELY WITH MOSCOW AND ASKED THAT THE TWO VESSELS NOT BE ARRESTED. VORONTSOV WAS TOLD THAT HIS REQUEST WOULD BE PASSED ON PROMPTLY BUT THAT NO COMMITMENTS COULD BE MADE.

4. SOME FIVE HOURS LATER, AFTER THE SOVIET TRAWLER HAD BEEN OVERTAKEN AND BOARDED, AND WHILE THE FACTORY SHIP CONTINUED TO FLEE, A MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED BY COAST GUARD FROM THE SOVIET FLEET COMMANDER WHICH STATED THAT THE SUSPECT VESSELS HAD ENTERED SHELTERED WATERS IN THE US CONTIGUOUS ZONE MERELY TO TRANSFER AN ILL CREWMAN.

5. IN LIGHT OF THE SOVIET CONTENTION, AND AFTER REVIEWING AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, THE COAST GUARD AND THE US ATTORNEY AT ANCHORAGE DECIDED THAT AVAILABLE EVIDENCE COULD NOT SUPPORT A CHARGE BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT AGAINST THE TWO VESSELS; I.E. THAT MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL AND CARGO ACTUALLY OBSERVED WAS NOT OF SUFFICIENT QUANTITY TO SHOW SUPPORT OF FISHING ACTIVITIES OR TO DISPROVE SOVIET CLAIMS IN REGARD TO AN ILL CREWMAN. THE CASE WAS THEREFORE TERMINATED.

6. CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE WILL FOLLOW. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SHIPS, SHIP DETENTION, ARRESTS, FISHING BOATS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE026201
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: WDYESS:CR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740248/aaaabsrr.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 24430
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <05 JUN 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET FISHING VESSELS - FURTHER PROBLEMS
TAGS: PFOR, UR
To: MOSCOW LENINGRAD
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005